

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL

MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 13, 2014

Meeting No.: 180

Project: Poppleton PUD- Phase IA

Phase: Schematic

Location: Poppleton neighborhood of West Baltimore

PRESENTATION:

Developer Dan Bythewood of La Cite' Development gave welcome, commended his team, and said that team would present the revised drawings:

- All previous panel comments were addressed.
- The design team paid attention to details and materials

David Dymond of Gensler presented the Architecture. Reviewed approved site plan: Blocks, H, G and E/F

Building Concepts:

- The inner skin and outer skin was defined and the facade made more purposeful
- The upper floors hang in space and sit upon a building base.
- The Art wall became more architectural.
- There is a 1' planer difference between skins. The inner skin is a cement fiber product. The outer skin is a cement fiber product with open joints.
- Block E/F: The outer skin returns back to meet the inner skin.
- East Elevation at Schroeder Street: Metal screen is located at the ground level to make the ground level appear active.
- The main gesture is a heavy yellow material introducing the outer material to the inner material. It hovers above the club level.
- There are piers that have an appearance of stone at pre-determined locations. They are column enclosures.
- Screening: bar grating at parking, curtain wall for retail, shimmer walls at some corners.

Parking

- Block E/F: Parking only goes down a partial level.
- The parking is for residents and the count is .5 spaces/ residential unit.
- The parking is screened with a metal panel that may have graphic designs in some cases.
- The garage lighting is placed/angled to light the screen and not to showcase activity inside.
- Block G will have a 4' wall to block parking.

Residential

- Block E/F: Residential elevated above retail to provide parking.
- The canopy is extended to signal the residential entrance. A special ‘wood’ soffit creates the entry. The same material with the appearance of wood, is used on the underside of balconies.
- Splashes of color designate the arrival at home.

Retail

- The retail entries have smaller solar sunshades.

Courtyard

- The court yards are on the same level. One is more active the other is passive.
- The amenity bar has been moved to the courtyard level and there may be a trellis over the courtyard.

Streetscape

- The streetscape is designed to make Amity and Schroeder equal.
- Tree planting on both sides of the street, total landscape design on the development side.
- Amity Street will have columnar shaped trees it fit on narrow sidewalk. There will also be planted pots.
- Pits will be longer to introduce more green.
- Schroeder Street will have regular spaced trees and the side walk will have an 8’ “spill out” space at the corners.
- The transition zone will have charcoal colored concrete pavers. The walk area will be scored concrete. There will be street lighting.
- No bike markings appear along Schroeder, but the developer will work to see if it can be done.
- There will be bump outs for traffic calming and on street parking.

Poe Park

- There is a consolidated service/storage area adjacent to the park.
- Stone relief is proposed along the wall. Quotes from Edgar Allen Poe and illustrations are proposed to be engraved on stone. There may also be areas of green wall.
- The park is proposed to be restful with the enclosure formed by the verticality of the building. Furnishings will include metal benched, trash recycling receptacles, and bollard lights. Some furnishings may be movable.
- There will several storm water planters located in the park.
- The diagonal in the paving leads from the corner to the secondary residential lobby entrance.

Dog Park

- The park will be green and dog friendly. The surface will be covered with artificial turf to prevent ware of natural grass. The focal element will be a dry stream bed for storm water.

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

General

- Presentation was difficult to follow because of lack of reference to previous work. There should be a better recollection of the story from presentation to presentation.
- Drawings should be presented from macro level to details; here they seemed quite scattered. Elevations needs key plans and street names.
- Presentation time needs to be more limited to the allotted 15-20 minutes to allow for Panel questions and Comments without producing a significant time delay.

Building Concepts

- The proposed building skins have advanced and improved since the last review. Departure from static inner skin and introduction of blocks of color noted. Preferred when skins were simple, warm and cool, or wood and metal.
- Introduction of wood like material on underside of balconies is positive; as is the simplicity of the residential entrance.
- The overall design is attempting to do too many things. The base of the building is disconnected to the main body. The silver/metal horizontal band further separates the two and should be reconsidered.
- The loss of retail space replaced with open garage is unfortunate and may seriously hurt the ability to stretch retail from this phase north to the future proposed large box style retail. Re-study street wall, use material that is more reflective of store fronts to screen some of the parking. The Panel cautioned the developer on the 200' of continuous non retail environment, as it may not be a pleasant environment. There seems to be too much dead space within the block of single sided retail.
- The urban wall needs to be rooted in the sidewalk. It should come down and touch the ground. This will break up the ground plane. If the building wall came down and the screen went behind it, there may be less concern over the use/amount of metal screen.
- The piers on Schroeder Street side of the building are abandoned on the park side of the building. This hurts the sense of retail environment.
- Lost some character in the massing of the building on the park with the introduction of the solid 'Poe feature wall'. Consider the continuation of the 'retail' language of base around the entire building, into the park space for consistency.
- Building H appeared as if it came out of the courtyard. Now it doesn't appear to be a part of the park or the street. It should be part of the park and should sit on columns with flow through; as if an object within the park space.
- Troubled by the over-articulation of the corners at the residential levels. Street wall should turn the corner and the statements can vary at the corner. The statements can also be smaller.
- Costs: make sure there is a handle on the costs and value engineering won't have to occur.

Parking

- Good that parking is being reduced and the “TOD” elements being emphasized.
- Bar grating will not block lighting and activity in parking garage. The Panel suggest reconsidering the screening type and overall architecture of the base (see comments above).
- The screening should be different depending on the orientation of the wall.

Retail

- Where is the retail awnings and signage? The location could affect the overall look of building. The next review should include the philosophical approach to retail signage an elevations/details showing it on the building.

Streetscape

- Corners do not provide adequate seating or spill out areas.

Poe Park

- Design is too busy with too many masters. Landscape in the park is overworked. The park design does not create a sense of useable space. It is very object oriented, and should be re-thought.
- The park should be a passive place for people to sit and enjoy.
- The wall graphics along the park are too ambitious and are overwhelming the Poe House. The layouts should be simplified. Reconsider the diagonal access from the corner to the secondary lobby entrance – it reduces the useful area of the small park and further emphasizes the connection of multiple architectural ideas coming together.
- Service corridor blocks connection to the park. The Panel suggests exploring additional ways that the building and its residents can more directly access and enjoy the park space.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Speaker One

- The design has gone backwards and does not find the building attractive. Looks like a hospital or police station. Seems very industrial not residential.

Speaker Two

- The building is too bright. The colors are not appealing. More brick, like the architecture in the community, would be desired. Brown colors, stone or brick would be considered better.
- Worried about the lack of retail parking within the project and its effect on Vine Street; taking away parking for residents.

Speaker Three

- The development will help stabilize the community. It is an improvement to the community and a plus. This development needs to be built, and bring improvement to the community. This project will make the community more secure.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend approval with comments of the Schematic Architecture. The Panel looks forward to seeing the above comments addressed in the next presentation.

Attending:

Dan Bythwood – LaCite Development
Susan Williams – STV
Chris Tint – Diversified
Ryan Johnson, Stephan Kelly – Mayhan Rykiel
Maria Wolf, Logan Mahaffey, Elaine Asal, Jim Camp – Gensler
Natalie Sherman- Baltimore Sun
Jane Bucceri – Hollins Roundhouse
Klaus Phillipsen – Arch Plan
Bettie McKnight
Dorothy J. Page – DPV
Reverend Ernest King – Poe Terrace/ Christian Warriors

Lembit Jogi – Housing
Patrick Terranova - BDC

Ms. Jones Allen*, Ms. Judith Meany, Messr. Bowden, Burns, and Haresign - UDARP Panel
Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Theo Ngongang, Brent Flickinger, Eric Tiso –
Planning Department